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Subject: Watchdog says EPA did not justify Pruitt security spending

By Alex Guillén

09/04/2018 10:03 AM EDT

EPA failed to properly analyze the threats made against former Administrator Scott Pruitt before dramatically expanding his security detail and incurring sharply higher costs, the agency's inspector general said in a report today.

Decisions about Pruitt's security were made "based on management decisions rather than being supported by a threat analysis," the Office of Inspector General report said. "As a result, the costs of providing increased security services to Administrator Pruitt have more than doubled compared to the costs of services provided to Administrator [Gina] McCarthy."

The office that oversees the administrator's security detail "has expressed a commitment to prepare policies and procedures and perform regularly scheduled threat analysis," the OIG report said.

Pruitt's expansion of his security team was at the heart of several of his major scandals. Trump administration officials said the unprecedented round-the-clock protection and first-class plane travel were necessary because of threats made against Pruitt and his family. But that increased protection cost \$3.5 million in Pruitt's first year, more than double what his predecessor spent in her final year.

The report on Pruitt's security detail is the first of what is expected to be a string of inquiries into his actions. Other probes being conducted by EPA's inspector general include Pruitt's trip to Morocco to promote natural gas and his other travels, his \$50-a-night condo rental, large raises given to top aides, a \$43,000 secure phone booth and a meeting with a coal mining group.

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